

## **Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE)**

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This report describes anticipated grant and professional development activities related to funds allocated from Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019, line item 7061-9650, including anticipated integrated student wellness grants to assist schools and districts with addressing non-academic barriers to student success, to establish infrastructure to facilitate integrated coordination of school and community-based resources, including but not limited to, social services, mental health, and behavioral health resources, and to support increased professional development opportunities for public school employees to identify students in need of mental and behavioral health support.

January 2020

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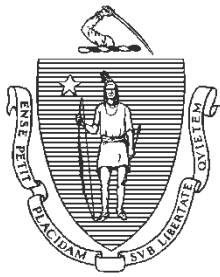
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# Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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January 17, 2019

Dear Governor and Members of the General Court:

I am pleased to submit this *Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE) Report*, pursuant to Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019, line item [7061-9650](#) that reads in part:

*“...provided further, that the department shall issue a report not later than December 31, 2019 outlining all student supports efforts funded by this item; provided further, that the report shall be provided to the senate president, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on education.”*

The primary goal of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s (Department’s) [supporting social-emotional learning, health, and safety](#) strategic priority is to promote systems and strategies that foster safe, positive, healthy, culturally-responsive, and inclusive learning environments that address students’ varied needs and improve educational outcomes for all. Furthermore, one of the four key themes outlined in my plan for [Our Way Forward](#) is *Holistic Support and Enrichment*. This theme, along with *Innovation and Evidence Based Practices*, and *The State as a Partner*, are all essential to help students engage in the central theme of *Deeper Learning*. As noted in my *Our Way Forward* report, we need “systems of integrated student supports” to “free children up to engage in the type of critical thinking and deeper learning to which our schools and education systems aspire.”<sup>1</sup> The work of this SHARE line-item and associated efforts include the state working in partnership with districts, professional development providers, and others, to help further innovation and evidence-based practices related to integrated student supports - that by their nature help strengthen holistic supports and enrichment, and help students be able to engage in deeper learning inside and outside of the school day and setting. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the recently passed Student Opportunity Act<sup>2</sup> encourages local districts to invest in “social services to support students’ social-emotional and physical health” as a strategy to “address persistent disparities in achievement among student subgroups.”

<sup>1</sup> Weiss, Elaine and Reville, Paul (2019). *Broader, Bolder, Better: How Schools and Communities Help Students Overcome the Disadvantages of Poverty*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 4-5.

<sup>2</sup> An Act relative to educational opportunity for students, S. 2142 (Chapter 132 of the Acts of 2019): <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2019/Chapter132>

The efforts funded through this SHARE line-item will help further the ability of communities across the commonwealth to maximize coordination with service providers and establish more comprehensive continuums of care. These funds will help to increase student access to behavioral and mental health services, delivered in partnership with community-based providers. In addition, professional development coordinated by the Department will be offered to school staff to improve their ability to identify students' behavioral and mental health needs as part of comprehensive, integrated, tiered approaches to promoting wellness for all students, and to addressing needs of students requiring additional supports.

This report outlines efforts underway to fund activities supported through this line item. These efforts include competitive integrated student wellness grants, to be awarded through the Fund Codes (FC) 336/613 *Supporting Students' Behavioral and Mental Health and Wellness* Funding Opportunity Request for Proposals (RFP) later this winter. The Department is making efforts to coordinate and align related opportunities where appropriate and helpful, and as an example, a portion of those integrated student wellness grants will be funded through the through the [2018](#) and [2019](#) supplemental budgets' line 7061-0010, focused on connecting schools with community-based mental and behavioral health service providers. Additional efforts funded through the SHARE line 7061-9650 include professional development opportunities, such as the Systemic Student Support (S3) Academy in which 15 districts are participating this 2019-2020 school year. This S3 Academy is providing professional development, resources, tools, and supports to assist participating schools and districts in designing, consistent with best practices, systems of integrated student support to address students' social-emotional and physical health needs.

We look forward to continuing to facilitate and coordinate this work, and thank the Governor and Legislature for your commitment to the students of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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## Introduction

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education respectfully submits this Report to the Legislature: Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE) pursuant to Chapter 41 of the Acts of 2019, line item 7061-9650:

*“For the Supporting Healthy Alliances Reinforcing Education (SHARE) grant program to provide integrated student wellness grant program to assist schools with addressing non-academic barriers to student success; provided, that grants shall be used to support school districts establishing an infrastructure to facilitate integrated coordination of school and community-based resources, including but not limited to, social services, mental health, and behavioral health resources; provided further, that not less than \$1,000,000 shall be awarded by the department to schools and school districts serving high percentages of low-income students; provided further, that said supports may include funding to assist public school districts in contracting with licensed community-based health care service providers, including mental and behavioral health providers; provided further, that said program shall be administered by the department of elementary and secondary education in coordination with the executive office of health and human services; provided further, that the department shall prioritize applications for such services that are submitted by school districts whose applications are consistent with infrastructure and coordination efforts linking schools to community-based resources in accordance with item 7061-9612 of section 2 of chapter 154 of the acts of 2018; provided further, that such support grants may be expended to assist school districts in connecting students with community-based services to maximize coordination with service providers and establish more comprehensive continuums of care; provided further, that such grants may also be expended to support increased professional development opportunities for public school employees to identify students in need of mental and behavioral health support; provided further, that the department shall issue a report not later than December 31, 2019 outlining all student supports efforts funded by this item; provided further, that the report shall be provided to the senate president, the speaker of the house, the chairs of the house and senate committees on ways and means, and the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on education; provided further, that for the purposes of this item, appropriated funds may be expended for programs or activities during the summer months; provided further, that any unexpended funds in this item shall not revert but shall be made available for the purpose of this item until August 31, 2021; and provided further, that any funds distributed from this item to a city, town or regional school district shall be deposited with the treasurer of such city, town or regional school district and held in a separate account and shall be expended by the school committee of such city, town or regional school district without further appropriation, notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary “*

This reports outlines efforts to date to establish grants with public school districts, and contracts to provide professional development pursuant to this line item.

Progress toward grant disbursement during school year 2019-2020 includes continued inter-agency consultation between the Department, the Executive Office of Education (EOE), and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services agencies (EOHHS), including the Departments of Public Health and Mental Health (DPH and DMH), to leverage existing and planned initiatives and to promote complementary and supplemental activities.

## **Selection of Participating Districts**

The Department is in the process of posting the fiscal year 2019-2020 (FY20) integrated student wellness grant opportunity, through the Fund Code (FC) 336/613 *Supporting Students' Behavioral and Mental Health and Wellness* Funding Opportunity Request for Proposals (RFP), for which Massachusetts public school districts and collaboratives are eligible to apply. Proposals will be due in mid-February 2020. The Department plans to complete the competitive review process and award grants by mid-March 2020, at which time additional information will be available about funded grantees. Awarded grantees will implement grant activities from upon approval through June 30, 2021. A portion of the FC 336/613 grants will be funded through the SHARE line (7061-9650), and the balance will be funded through the [2018](#) and [2019](#) supplemental budgets' line 7061-0010, focused on connecting schools with community-based mental and behavioral health service providers. More details and an update on those grants will be included in the 7061-0010 legislative report due March 5, 2020.

## **Coordinated Professional Development**

Pursuant to this line item (7061-9650), the Department is coordinating and supporting efforts related to integrated student supports and the Safe and Supportive Schools Framework and Self-Assessment Tool. A portion of the SHARE line item is dedicated to the Systemic Student Support (S3) Academy, which is run through a partnership between the Department, the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy, and the Center for Optimized Student Support at the Boston College Lynch School of Education and Human Development. The FY20 SHARE line item allows for the expansion and improvement of the S3 Academy efforts that began in FY18 and FY19.

As a reminder, initial S3 Academy related efforts in FY18 and FY19 (funded through an earmark in line item 7061-9612) were described in the legislative report, [Integrating Student Supports \(May 2019\)](#), and are briefly summarized here. Efforts during FY18 included drafting (winter 2018), posting (spring 2018), and reviewing submissions and selecting vendors (spring-summer 2018) related to a Request for Responses (RFR) through the state procurement system. In FY19, the Department worked with the selected partners (the Rennie Center and the Boston College Center for Optimized Student Support) to facilitate an opportunity for nine district teams to participate in a series of professional development offerings with self-assessment (a landscape analysis) and action planning components (winter-spring 2018-2019), leading to action plan implementation (supported by the Department and partners) starting in FY20 (beginning in the summer/fall 2019). This year (FY20), the SHARE line item is supporting an expanded cohort of 15 districts (listed below) to participate in professional development, action planning, and implementation support efforts.

The S3 Academy is deepening practitioners' understanding of the critical characteristics of a system that effectively and proactively identifies and addresses each student's strengths and

needs. It is also helping district and school practitioners to identify next steps in developing and implementing a system of integrated student support. By the end of this school year, the goal is for participants to be implementing an approach to student support that can continue to be further embedded in the ongoing work of schools and districts, helping to create safe and supportive environments in which there is educational opportunity, access, and equity for all.

Participating schools and districts will implement best practices for integrated student support by *(1) assessing the strengths and needs of every student, across multiple developmental domains, resulting in a plan with tailored services for each student; and (2) developing and embedding systems of integrated student support that are sustainable.* Funding from the SHARE line is enabling the Department to contract with the S3 Academy partners to provide FY20 S3 Academy participants with professional development, resources, tools, and supports that include four in-person workshops (September 23, November 6, and December 12, 2019 and February 6, 2020), at least two webinars (September 11, 2019 and January 14, 2020), regular coaching tailored to the needs of each community (ongoing), and site visits (in May 2020).

As noted above, 15 districts with teams from 50 schools are enrolled in the S3 Academy. Seven (7) districts are in their first year of participation (year 1), and eight (8)<sup>3</sup> are in their second year of participation (year 2). Currently participating districts include the following.

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agawam (year 1)</li> <li>• Belchertown (year 2)</li> <li>• Fall River (year 2)</li> <li>• Fitchburg (year 1)</li> <li>• Grafton (year 1)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holyoke (year 1)</li> <li>• Hudson (year 2)</li> <li>• Melrose (year 1)</li> <li>• Nantucket (year 2)</li> <li>• Nashoba Regional (year 2)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Bedford (year 1)</li> <li>• Shrewsbury (year 2)</li> <li>• Somerville (year 1)</li> <li>• Taunton (year 2)</li> <li>• Wachusett Regional (year 2)</li> </ul> |
|--|--|---|

The SHARE line item has allowed for the S3 Academy’s significant expansion in scope, as shown below.

|   | S3 Academy FY 18-FY19<br>(funded through 7061-9612) | S3 Academy FY20<br>(funded through 7061-9650) |
|---|---|---|
| Number of Districts   | 9   | 15  |
| Percent of Districts’ Students who are “High Needs”         | 42% (range of 22%-76%)                              | 55% (range of 23%-84%)                        |
| Number of Participating Schools                             | 31  | 50  |
| Number of Students in Participating Districts (approximate) | 47,200  | 80,300  |
| Number of Workshops, Webinars, Coaching per District        | 5   | 15  |

As participants represent urban, suburban, and rural school districts, they provide the Department and its partners the opportunity to learn from the S3 Academy about the different experiences, assets, and needs relative to building and executing integrated systems of student support for students across the Commonwealth.

<sup>3</sup> One additional district, Arlington, participated only during FY19 (year 1).



### ***Additional Professional Learning Opportunities:***

In addition, and in coordination with efforts begun in FY19 and supported through the \$7.5 million in supplemental funding authorized under line item [7061-0010](#) of Chapter 273 of the Acts of 2018, the Department and its contractor, Walker, is offering a series of professional development offerings, *Sustainable Solutions: Applying a Systems Approach to Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health Supports and Services* in Schools. This series includes statewide and regional sessions, and is designed to promote social emotional learning and increase awareness of and access to mental health supports and services in schools. Associated with this series, the Department is also sponsoring trainings (January and May 2020) for up to 32 individuals to become certified [Youth Mental Health First Aid](#) (YMHFA) instructors. As an extension of this, throughout the spring 2020, the Department plans to coordinate up to five regional YMHFA trainings for school staff and other community partners who work with students. The YMHFA trainings are “designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis.” The S3 Academy participants, SHARE grantees, and others will be alerted to these opportunities as they are confirmed.

Additional professional development opportunities will also be developed and tailored to the identified needs of the selected FY20 SHARE grantees. These will include opportunities for district and school teams to come together and learn from each other, and to self-assess and develop action plans to build comprehensive and integrated systems for student support. These opportunities will help address student barriers to success, and assist with efforts to further engage students in deeper learning and efforts that promote health, wellness, and safety.